

NORTHERN NEW MEXICO COLLEGE



**NORTHERN NEW MEXICO COLLEGE
BOARD OF REGENTS**

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

NORTHERN New Mexico College



NOTICE

The Board of Regents of Northern New Mexico College will hold a regular meeting on **Friday, September 26, 2025 at 9:00AM**, Via Zoom and in person at Northern New Mexico College, Alumni Hall, El Rito Campus, El Rito, New Mexico.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://nnmc.zoom.us/j/93884181987>

FINAL AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- III. PUBLIC INPUT**
- IV. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD**
 - A. Board of Regents Subcommittee Reports
 - 1. Housing Committee – Informational
 - 2. Audit, Finance, Facilities Committee – Informational
 - 3. Academic and Student Affairs Committee – Informational
 - 4. Governance Committee - Informational
 - 5. HERC Committee - Informational
- V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Action Required**
- VI. PRESIDENT’S REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - A. Celebrate Northern – Informational
 - B. CUP/NMICC Report – Informational
 - C. NNMC Foundation – Informational
 - D. Introduction of Staff and Faculty – Informational
- VII. FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT REPORT**
- VIII. STUDENT SENATE PRESIDENT REPORT**
- IX. DEEP DIVE**
 - A. HLC Assurance Argument
- X. EXECUTIVE SESSION**
 - (1) Limited personnel matters related to the hiring, promotion, demotion, dismissal, assignment, resignation, or investigation or consideration of complaints or charges against an employee;
 - a. No items
 - (2) Bargaining strategy preliminary to collective bargaining
 - a. No items

- (3) Threatened or pending litigation subject to the attorney-client privilege in which the College may be a participant; and
 - a. No items
- (4) Real estate acquisition or disposal.
 - a. No items
- XI. VOTE TO REOPEN MEETING** - Certification that only those matters described in the Executive Session Agenda were discussed in the closed session; if necessary, final action with regard to certain matters will be taken in Open Session
- XII. ADJOURNMENT**

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), physically challenged individuals who require special accommodations should contact the President's Office at 505-747-2140 at least one week prior to the meeting or as soon as possible.



MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents,
Northern New Mexico College

From: Hector Balderas, JD, CFE
President

Date: September 26, 2025

Re: Board of Regents Meeting Minutes

Issue

Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) provides, on a monthly basis, Board of Regents Minutes from the previous month for approval.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board of Regents approve the attached Board of Regents Minutes for August 29, 2025 as submitted or if applicable, as amended.

**BOARD OF REGENTS MINUTES****AUGUST 30, 2024**

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Regents of northern New Mexico College was held on Friday, August 29, 2025 at 9:00AM, In Person and Via Zoom at, Northern New Mexico College, El Rito Campus. Regents Present in person and Viz Zoom: Michael A. Martin, Erica Velarde, Ruben Archuleta, Ron Lovato and Dolores Gurule.

Northern New Mexico College Staff Present: President Hector Balderas, JD, CFE, René Vellanoweth, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs, Matt Baca General Counsel, Theresa Storey, Chief Financial Officer, Scott Stokes, Chief Information Officer, Juan Gallegos, Windows Systems/Information Security Administrator, Kristy Alton, Director, Title V, Sally Martinez, Executive Assistant for the Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs, Alejandra Jaramillo, Director, HEP, Evette Abeyta, Budget Director, Christian Gomez, Technical Trades Academic Advisor, Edwina Romero, Dual Credit Coordinator, Joshua Lopez, Dual Credit Outreach Specialist, Josef Weese, Distance Education Coordinator, Rishi Poudyal, Institutional Research Analyst, Marcel Pouvijua, Payroll Officer, Stephanie Sandoval, Interim Human Resources Director, Vince Lithgow, Accountant III, Ashley Duemmler, STEM Career Transfer Internship Coordinator, Sandy Krolick, Creative Director, Communications & Marketing, Tobe Bott Lyons, Upward Bound Director, Joe Padilla, Chair of Technical Trades, Carmella Sanchez, Director of Institutional Research, Emma Hashman, PDSO Director, Geno Trujillo, Director of Security, Farjahan Shawon, Director of Teaching and Learning Center, Sondra Adams, Associate Vice President, Tammy Winston, Student Life Coordinator, Martin Shupla, Director of Library and Amy Peña, Executive Office Director.

Faculty Present: Scott Braley, Faculty Senate President, Rhiannon West, Anthony Ballas, Sandra Rodriguez

Others Present: Jake Arnold, Angelita Romero, Tim Crone, Brandee DeAguiro, Lauren Dunbarr,

I. CALL TO ORDER

Board President Martin called the meeting to order at 9:06AM

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Michael Martin stated he has some changes to the agenda; we are going to move the Executive Session up to after public input and then we'll have the Creation of Staff Senate. We are going move Item VII, under staff reports, the creation of the Staff Senate right after Executive Session.

Board President Martin asked President Balderas if this is correct. President Balderas stated it is and then Item VI right under Item VII. Board President Martin stated right after the creation. President Balderas stated he is moving those three. Board President Martin stated we are moving Items VII, V and VI.

Board President Martin entertained a motion to approve the agenda as amended.

Regent Velarde moved to approve the agenda as amended. Second – Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC INPUT

None.

IV. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

A. Board of Regents Subcommittee Reports

1. Housing Committee

Regent Archuleta stated the dorms in El Rito are, have been pretty much completed. The first phase has been completed. Students moved in on Thursday, August 14th. The Casa Connection grant was \$700,000 is fully expended and went to multiple dorm housing improvements and we have begun phase two of the next project of the dorms. New furniture was purchased for the dorms. Regent Archuleta met with Leo Valdez Monday to start with the Espanola dorm project so he had a few people that he is going to contact and we can get underway with the developmental study.

2. Audit, Finance, Facilities Committee

Regent Velarde stated we will be talking about the items. Chairman Martin asked under the audit if Regent Archuleta was able to attend the entrance conference. Regent Archuleta attended the audit entrance meeting. All audit team is local and very professional. It was a very good audit committee and group.

3. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Did not meet.

4. Governance Committee

Did not meet.

5. HERC Committee

Chairman Martin stated HERC is trying to set up a meeting for September to discuss CUP and NMICC's legislative priorities. There will be more to follow.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Action Required

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to approve the minutes of

Regent Velarde moved to approve the minutes of July 23, 2025. Second – Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Martin stated we will go on to the President's Report and Announcements.

VI. PRESIDENT'S REPORT AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Celebrate Northern

President Balderas introduced René Vellanoweth, Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs. We would like to welcome him to his first Board of Regents meeting.

President Balderas stated we would like to celebrate and recognize Regent Velarde. Regent Velarde and President Balderas attended and the college was the recipient of the Hispanic Serving Institution award at the Angeles Investors Q3 Summit. This was created by Angeles Investors which is a group that cares about proper investment dollars going to minority-owned investments in startups but they recognized Northern New Mexico College for being an outstanding Hispanic-serving institution and President Balderas thanked Regent Velarde for not only inviting us but bringing positive recognition on a national level. Regent Velarde stated us and New Mexico State Foundation were recognized so we were the two New Mexico institutions but we are the institution they are the foundation. President Balderas thanked Regent Velarde for not only inviting us but bringing positive recognition on a national level. President Balderas stated he is excited about the next phase of this.

We have just completed the first stage of our “Online Hub” project. Karla Walton, the videographer from NMSU Global, spent two days on campus filming students and faculty for a promotional video for our online programs. I want to thank everyone who helped make this a successful shoot, from the students who shared their experiences at Northern to the faculty who promoted our programs, as well as all the staff members who helped organize and execute the filming or made space available for the crew. Thanks also to the facilities people who helped make sure we looked good and to the Lazy Buffalo for providing meals. Ms. Walton was very impressed by everyone’s Eagle Spirit, love for Northern, professionalism, patience, and willingness to take time out of their busy days to work with the production crew. A special thanks to the Communications Department for doing the lion’s share of the work to organize the filming and assure that everything went smoothly, and to Lloyd Gray for serving as production assistant.

For the first time in more than a decade, students have moved back into the dorms on our historic El Rito campus. I want to thank everyone who worked so hard to get these dorms ready for occupancy and to help the student move in on moving day. We gave the students welcome bags from The Pantry and they found letters in their rooms from myself, Coach Michael Dominguez and Coach Mandy Montoya. Each of the students has their own room and shared spaces that include a comfortable lounge, study spaces and a fully equipped kitchen.

We awarded the President’s Eagle Award to the Business Office during Convocation for their hard work bringing the college back to fiscal responsibility. We went from audits with more than 60 findings to 25 findings two years ago, six findings last year then down to one this year. The State Department of Education has removed us from enhanced fiscal watch oversight. I want to thank every member of that office for the long, hard hours – including over breaks – to make this happen.

We graduated four dual credit students and 12 college students from our new Phlebotomy Program this summer. This program is a great example of the power of partnerships, with Los Alamos National Laboratory, our Department of Nursing & Health Sciences, Española Valley High School and Española Presbyterian Hospital coming together to offer this new discipline.

We also had 14 students complete the Fast-Track to Success Summer Bridge program, which helps prepare both high school students and adult learners for the rigors of college coursework. We are grateful for the Title V F2F and Title III grants that covered all materials, books, supplies, snacks, and lunches.

We are launching four new programs this fall. The Certificate in BIOTECHNOLOGY Program will prepare students for a career in biotechnology, healthcare, or lab sciences. Our Tech Trades Department is now offering certificates in welding and HVAC that will help prepare students for entry-level positions in the industry. Our Carpentry Technology Associate of Applied Science Degree, which will launch in the second eight weeks of this semester, will qualify its graduates to start a career as a carpenter's apprentice.

Eight of our students have been awarded LANL Foundation Scholarships ranging from \$750 to \$10,000. Deidre Hagan, Simone Fresquez and Esperanza Gonzales are four-year scholarship winners and Norman Martinez, Alexander Quintana, Yvonne Dasheno, Sofia Rodriguez Arriaga and James O'Donnell are Career Pathways Scholarship recipients. Congratulations to all of you!

We hosted a couple of high-profile events in the past month. We helped the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (in partnership with the LANL Foundation) celebrate its fifth birthday by hosting one of a series of community-based resource fairs across New Mexico. The event combined state agencies and community organizations offering programs and services that support early childhood development with fun activities for the entire family.

Faculty and staff from Northern also joined a town hall working group focused on how to reshape education in New Mexico to meet the mandates of the Yazzie/Martinez lawsuit. They explored topics such as how to train high-quality culturally and linguistically responsive educators, how do we develop educators who reflect and uplift diverse communities and a community-centered roadmap to support Native education rights.

We hosted a free health fair on Wednesday for our students, faculty, staff and community, with health screenings, MMR vaccines, mobile dental services, STD testing and information on transportation services and Medicaid assistance.

We have been included in the Complete College America Photo Library, which has thousands of photos that showcase real students on actual campuses from communities like Northern. It is now available for everyone to explore and use at <https://completecollegephotolibrary.org/>.

Student Life has been welcoming our students back with a number of events, helping students find their classes, learn about clubs and organizations and get to know their fellow students at social bash and Mario Kart Tournament. Math Center of Excellence also hosted a welcome back event, with games, puzzles and the opportunity to learn about all the math and science tutoring services available for students.

Our Department of Student Success and the Lazy Buffalo are hosting a series of healthy eating events. Their most recent one was a delicious hands-on shrimp cocktail experience.

B. CUP/NMICC Report

Most everything CUP/NMICC related at this time revolves around the interim legislative session and development of the higher ed. unified priorities; here are some of the highlights of where we are there:

- CUP held its annual retreat this week and had great discussion on the following:
- 2026 GO Bond/Capital Outlay
 - Began discussion in preparation for next year's GO Bond
 - Dr. Gamble, David Abbey and Gerald Hoehne gave insights from last year's campaign, and what to look out for next year's
- First Draft of Unified Priorities
 - Recurring Priorities
 - I&G - request 2.7% increase to formula funding
 - Employee benefit changes - fully fund statutorily enhanced employee benefits, including any required employer share
 - Cost of Living Adjustment - provide equivalent increases that go to state agency and K12 employees
 - Non-formula adjustment - student support funding to support retention & completion efforts
 - Non-recurring Priorities
 - Continued funding of Workforce Training GRO appropriation to include funding beyond FY27
 - Statewide Initiatives
 - Campus Safety (\$15M)
 - Building Renewal & Replacement (\$30M-\$100M)
 - Equipment Renewal & Replacement (\$5M-\$10M)
 - Cybersecurity (\$5.4M)
 - Dual Credit - request legislature to have PED provide funding for dual credit tuition
 - Continued support for funding Lottery & Opportunity scholarships
- Conversations with HED Secretary and Legislative leaders on higher priorities including the HUB, impacts of federal funding, etc.

C. NNMC Foundation

I. FY26 Philanthropic Donations

July 1, 2025 to August 29, 2025 - \$88,458.00

President's Eagle \$1,000,000 Campaign – \$565,375.00

D. Introduction of Staff and Faculty

President Balderas introduced the following staff and faculty.

Anita Bringas

Title V Project Manager

Anita Bringas joins Northern as the Interim Project Manager for the Office of Title V initiatives. She brings 15 years' experience in higher education with a focus on Hispanic Serving Institutions from her tenure at UNM-Taos, where she served as the Strategic Support Manager. In this role, Ms. Bringas supported initiatives that included grant development and implementation, government affairs, tribal relations, marketing and communications, data analysis and reporting and campus events. Simultaneously, Anita pursued her own education, obtaining an MPA from UNM in 2016 as a first generation, non-traditional, minority student. She has volunteered on the Alliance of HSI Educators (AHSIE) Council and served as an external evaluator for HSI grants.

Heriberto Calderon

Safety & Security Officer

Heriberto Calderon is a new member of the Northern's Security Team. Heriberto brings with him positive energy and a strong commitment to campus safety. He also values meeting new people and learning new things, which makes him an excellent fit for our team and our campus community.

Kimberly Greer

Assistant Professor, Nursing & Health Sciences

Kim Greer is a new Assistant Professor in our Nursing & Health Sciences Department. She is a registered nurse and nurse midwife. After obtaining her ADN degree, Kim worked mostly in NICU and OB for many years before returning to school to earn her MSN and become a nurse midwife. Throughout her career, she has sought out and enjoyed every opportunity to teach, whether that be precepting newly hired nurses or working with nursing students in the clinical setting. In addition to acute care, Kim has also worked in ambulatory care, public health, and as an OB clinical instructor.

Becky Kappus

Assistant Professor, Teacher Education

Becky Kappus joins us as an Assistant Professor in Teacher Education. Dr. Kappus has more than 30 years of educator experience, including working as a middle school classroom teacher for more than 25 years and as a university education professor and an

administrator at the New Mexico Public Education Department. Dr. Kappus earned her Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction from New Mexico State University in 2016 and her M.A. in education, language, literacy, and sociocultural studies from the University of New Mexico in 2006. She completed a B.S. in secondary education from Utah State University.

Javin Lujan
Safety & Security Officer

Javin Lujan is another new member of our Safety & Security team. Javin has served as a foreman at Hacienda Home Center since graduating from Pojoaque Valley High School in May 2021, where he oversaw daily operations, coordinated crews, and ensured projects were completed safely, efficiently, and with high-quality results. His role has enabled him to develop and showcase strong leadership skills, guiding his team with integrity and setting an example through his dedication and work ethic. His journey reflects dedication, growth, and a strong sense of responsibility—qualities he continues to carry forward in both his work and personal life.

Isabel Marlens
Assistant Professor

Isabel Marlens joins Northern as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Language and Letters. In her previous position, she taught first-year composition, creative writing, and science writing at the University of Idaho, where she also served as the Associate Director of the Writing Center and as a writing consultant for graduate, postdoc, and faculty writers. She has an MFA in Nonfiction Writing from the University of Idaho and a B.A. in Literature and Evolution and Ecology from Bennington College. She has also worked as a writer in the nonprofit world.

MariaElena Salazar
Assistant Professor, Teacher Education

MariaElena Salazar is also a new Assistant Professor in the Teacher Education Department. Dr. Salazar has been a professional educator for 25 years, working with learners from birth through doctoral level. She has taught and supervised pre- and in-service teachers across the state and in many settings (e.g., tribal, public, private) at New Mexico State University, the University of New Mexico, and Española Public Schools. Her areas of expertise include Early Childhood Education and Care, Multicultural Education, Teacher Preparation and Literacy.

Cecelia Shaw
Lab Manager

Cecelia Shaw is the new Lab Manager in the BCES Department. She is a native New Mexican who graduated from the University of New Mexico with a B.A. in Biology and Criminology and a minor in Chemistry. Prior to joining us she briefly worked in the Cook Molecular Evolution and Ecology lab at UNM as an intern.

Katelyn Yuzos

Assistant Women's Basketball Coach

Our newest Assistant Women's Basketball Coach, Katelyn Yuzos, is no stranger to Northern. Katelyn was a member of our Women's Basketball team from 2018 – 2020, serving as captain for the 2018 – 2019 squad. Her career was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. She is a proud member of the Mescalero Apache tribe and a graduate of Mescalero Apache High School, where she played a pivotal role in securing a district title in 2018. Katelyn led her team to achieve one of the best records in Mescalero (27-2) and earned the title of MVP in her district during her senior year, guiding her team to a second-place ranking in the 2A category. During her high school career, Katelyn amassed numerous championships in tournament play, earning multiple MVP and all-tournament honors. She has also dedicated her time to supporting her community by providing guidance and tips to help others improve their skills. She and Coach Miera are living in the El Rito campus and helping those students to adjust. President Balderas thanked them for the extra time.

No questions from the Board of Regents.

VII. FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT REPORT

Dr. Scott Braley, Faculty Senate President stated first meeting will be next week and they will start having committee reports.

VIII. STUDENT SENATE PRESIDENT REPORT

Brandee DeAgüero stated they had their first official meeting on August 1st, welcoming new Senators and old Senators. Student Senate had a virtual training conference last Friday and they gained some good ideas for student senate.

No questions from the Board.

IX. STAFF REPORTS

A. Vice President for Finance & Administration

1. Fiscal Watch Report

Theresa Store, CFO presented the Fiscal Watch Report (attached). Ms. Storey stated the Fiscal Watch Report is prepared quarterly by the business office. It was a condition of the Fiscal Oversight Program which we are no longer on the bad kid list but the Business Office will maintain this report and report out. This is the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2025. These are unaudited, unadjusted numbers. The fourth quarter is unique as we try to close

out the fiscal year. As mentioned earlier, we are at the front end of our audit and still making adjustments to our trial balance so she would like to acknowledge again as always it is unaudited and unadjusted but again unique. Ms. Storey asked the Board of Regents for approval of the Fiscal Watch Report and stood for questions.

Chairman Martin entertained a Motion to approve the Fiscal Watch Report as presented and asked if there were questions from the Board.

No questions from the Board.

Chairman Martin asked if Regent Archuleta was still on the meeting. Regent Velarde stated he was but on a different number.

Regent Lovato moved to approve the Fiscal Watch Report. Second – Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – did not respond, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Annual Inventory Certification

Chairman stated he would like to commend whoever did this because it was a lot of work. It was a lot of work just to read the son of a gun.

Ms. Storey presented the inventory certification (attached). The annual certification of assets is performed by the business office and to call him out, Ms. Storey thinks he is online, Vince Lithgow is our lead accountant. He prepares the fiscal watch as well as leads the team to go out and physically inventory all \$39 million of our assets. It's a fiscal year-end inventory. They start in late June and it honestly takes us all the way to early August to literally go out physically inventory and she would be remiss if she didn't recognize also IT. They worked in conjunction with IT as a lot of the assets are maintained by our IT department. With that said, again, the physical inventory began in July ended in August and the packet is included here. Ms. Storey asked for approval of this item and stood for questions.

Regent Velarde – no questions.

Regent Lovato – no questions.

Regent Gurule – no questions.

Regent Archuleta – no response.

President Balderas stated to her point because she raised it, just for our audience, our guests this seems like kind of a bureaucratic function but he really, it not only goes to compliance, everyone deserve to safeguard something we purchase or in terms of how we are for it. It adds to the risk management that we might be a victim of crime or corruption or something like that but President Balderas also wants to come in when you lose control. It can quickly overwhelm a small staff or a small community and you all know because you've opened closet doors where there's old computers and stacked furniture and he is going to embarrass him a little bit but we have the chairman of the Board of Regents for this institution is probably the only guy that he would bet money helped us move trash and furniture out of the El Rito dorm the other day and so that's what also can happen when you don't take some of these systems around. So, President Balderas stated he wanted to commend the team for doing that but also it puts a lot of pressure later in years on the next future professors, future staff, to kind of inherit years of that so we are on better property disposition schedule as well as the inventory so he would just like to commend him for kind of commenting about that.

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to approve the Annual Inventory Certification.

Regent Velarde moved to approve the Annual Inventory Certification. Second – Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – did not respond, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Research and Public Service Projects (RPSP)

Ms. Storey stated annually we are allowed to submit our RPSPs or Research and Public Service projects to the Higher Education Department for consideration. Those requests are due September 15th every year. The Higher Education Department did release guidance, we are allowed to ask for three new RPSP projects and they did broaden the scope to include a loss of federal funding and Secretary Rodriguez acknowledged at that the Higher Education Department does intend to give priority to those items. With that said, what is shared is we have 9 requests before the Board of Regents. The teacher pipeline services, that currently is funded at about \$250,000 so we are seeking expansion for the teacher pipeline services. Additionally, athletics is currently funded at about \$571,000. We are seeking expansion for athletics program which has historically been underfunded. We're seeking to increase capacity and increase funding to support our new sports, tennis and cross country. The new programs that we're requesting are HEP, CAMP and HAP. Those are funded by the federal government but we are only allowed to request three new submissions and it is not unusual in some institutions that those are wrapped up together so we are asking for just over a million dollars to support our HEP and CAMP programs which each have about 5 FTE. Our upward Bound program has about 3FTE and so that ask is also before this body. We are asking for \$373,700 and lastly, we are putting a request for our Career Services Center. The Career Services Coordinator has

historically been funded by our Title V program. Over the last three years we've progressively worked to institutionalize that position and with this request we'll look at building capacity in the career services center. With that, Ms. Storey asked for approval.

Chairman Martin asked for CAMP, HEP and Upward are we sure we are not going to get any federal funding for those.

Ms. Storey stated no sir, for those we don't have current GANs and there's a lot of communications going back and forth about extension, about no-cost extension, which just means if they have carryover, they have authority to keep using those funds. The guidance out of HED was non-renewal of federal funding, but Ms. Storey thinks in this case, we're operating in that gray space to say no communication or translation has. We're building in the worst-case scenario.

President Balderas stated he thinks strategically, we've confirmed that the federal funding streams are very unstable. We can't, we're monitoring each one because they're all on different timelines and then secondly, with all the active litigation in the country right now and the attach on these type of student supports, whether they're HIS or built on certain qualifiers, like first generation students, the posture of the administration right now is that if it tries to help a poor, college student, it would be discriminatory. So, just in factoring all that, we are just trying to be ahead of the curve or prepare for worst-case scenarios.

Regent Velarde stated the only question she has, based off yesterday's conversation, again, with this, you know, good old STEM, RPSP, if they don't like you said, Regent Velarde thinks it was late yesterday, Vince said the, not yesterday, on Wednesday that they hadn't what was it? Put in an invoice? They have an invoice happened. So, what happens with that money? Do we just retain it? Does it just become our money? She means, how does that work? Ms. Storey stated the short easy answer is yes. The RPSPs are non-reverted. If they have carryover, typically, that would. Regent Velarde stated okay.

Chairman Martin asked if there were any other questions.

Regent Lovato moved to approve the RPSPs as presented. Second – Regent Velarde. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – no response, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Report of Actuals

Ms. Storey stated the Report of Actuals is also unaudited. You see the report come before you a couple of times a year, when we have our proposed operating budget, when we do our final BARs and finally for the report of actuals. Again, these are unaudited numbers

that are due to the HED September 15th every year. This is an informational item and Ms. Storey stated she is not going to line by line. What is covered in Exhibit 1 through 14, she believes is really a detailed version of what we saw in the fiscal watch report and it does present the figures in restricted and unrestricted. On 228 of the packet, what doesn't show up in the fiscal watch, but does show up in the report of actuals if representation of our FTE. So, for our report of actuals reporting that the furthest column to the right. Our unrestricted FTE was about 214.55 and our restricted is 42.85. The pages before this can give you a representation of what those FTE look like, what classifications are those in, and will just acknowledge that they do include our student workers and our work study and then the breakout just by area. One correction not note here, exhibit 5, there's \$3,000 sitting there. We will clean that up on our end. That should be in the next Exhibit 10 which is marked here as unassigned but this does represent our instruction costs. The other thing that we will update before submitting to HED, the proposed salary increases when we begin the year, we're in negotiations still and so, this exhibit or schedule still reflects 0% increase for faculty in fiscal year 25. Ms. Storey believes that was at 10% so we will make sure to get that correction.

Regent Velarde asked if that goes retroactively to the beginning of the fiscal year. Ms. Storey stated yes.

Chairman Martin asked if this was informational only. Ms. Storey stated yes.

5. Northern Federation of Educational Employees, AFT-NM, AFL-CIO Faculty Bargaining Unit Collective Bargaining Agreement

Chairman Martin stated we will go on to the Northern Federation and Educational Employees and asked Mr. Crone to join the Board of Regents. Chairman Martin stated they will start with full-time, the faculty bargaining unit.

Matthew Baca, General Counsel stated he will present the actual changes. He asked if he'd prefer to take comment and then do that. Chairman Martin asked Mr. Baca to review the changes right away.

Mr. Baca stated the first one up is the update to the full-time faculty CBA. This was not a full bargaining year. It was just a compensation bargaining year, so only Article 36 of the CBA was open strictly speaking, so the meat of the updates to their CBA are Article 36. Mr. Baca stated he will talk about a couple of MOOUs that we also signed that impact other areas of the CBA, but again, the meat of the changes is in the compensation article.

Mr. Baca stated starting with updating the salary matrix to reflect the 4% increase that was appropriated by, within 2025 so the salaries in that matrix are updated to reflect the 4% increase. We have updated, there was some existing language in the CBA that provided that the unit will work with the provost to develop a salary study to identify

what the salary should be for the full-time professorship that is currently in the matrix, but does not have an assigned value. The Board of Regents will recall that they approved in the last round, it was to include a full professorship as a promotional opportunity but at the time had not identified compensation so the CBA now dictates that prior to February 1 of 2026, in concert with the Provost and the Executive Office, that the bargaining unit will identify what are appropriate salary levels for that, that column or should he say that, column in the table. We updated the overload portion, so the way that full-time faculty are compensated for overload coursework, is they effectively are paid at the same rates as the adjunct. We'll get to the adjunct next but the dollar figures in the adjunct pay matrix changed so those changes were pulled over into the full-time CBA.

Mr. Baca stated on the topic of overload, it had historically been the practice, or at least has been over the last few years, that if you teach an overload course, it's subject to probation, both positive and negative. What that means is, depending on the number of students involved in the course, if it's less than 10, then you take a factor of each student that is lower than and reduce the hourly pay rate by that factor, or if it's more than 20, you get a bonus of. Between both units and we'll talk more about this again in the adjunct portion, the college has agreed to eliminate negative proration so that we're not docked if we are asked to teach a course for, that has less than 10 students and maintain the bonus if you are asked to teach us a class that has a bonus. So, that is reflected in the overload section of the full-time CBA. Then we also updated, there is existing language in the full-time compensation article that provides a 5% bonus of indirect costs if a faculty member is assigned or secures a grant. So, if oftentimes, not always, but sometimes when you get a, when you secure a grant, it comes with indirect costs for administration of the grant, so on and so forth. It's been the same college's practice over some time to allow somebody to, as a retention bonus, to get 5% of that indirect, directly, because they brought in the money, wanted to, we wanted to incentivize faculty to be able to secure grants on their own. We also recognize that there are some grants that are not necessarily faculty, secured, so to speak. The college might actually go out and get it and so somebody might get an assignment of a grant that they didn't actually seek themselves and so compensate them the same rate if you're assigned a grant that we acknowledge procure. That provision was also updated to increase the 5% to 70% if there are multiple PIs on the grant. So, if there are two faculty members who are principally in charge of the grant work, the amount goes up a little bit and the share of 7%. So those are the changes that we made to Article 36 as the Board of Regents will not in the memo and in the packet.

Mr. Baca stated we also entered into three MOUs that he'd like to touch on just very briefly. Under faculty duties and responsibilities, the existing language of the CBA requires faculty to maintain attendance data and share the data with Student Services for use in their work. We got a little ahead of the development of what to do with that data, where it goes and how it's used. It's still in development so we just agreed to put that provision in advance until that work is caught up and then we'll sit with the full-time

faculty about starting that process.

Mr. Baca stated under faculty rights to tenure, we made a very small change regarding the dossier that is prepared to support their candidacy and just amended the language to make that, to go away from binders and allow for the creation of electronic dossier and then the Board heard about this issue when they ratified or approved the non-exempt staff CBA.

Mr. Baca stated we also entered into a MOU regarding the sick leave bank that is currently articulated in the CBA after a lot of meeting and back and forth at the sort of the technical limitations in our workday system and the fact that the college had, may or may not have actually ever developed a bank, we were able to mutually agree to move to a donation program, so that rather than the maintenance of a bank where eligible employees could pull additional sick leave if they needed it, we've moved to a donation program where they still go through the same qualification process, HR will review that they qualify for some form of catastrophic leave, that they're running out of leave on their own, and now the idea is that we'll put a call out to the entire campus community to include staff and faculty for the donation of sick leave to go to that person up to a certain amount. Because we did not have a full negotiation with them, we've done that by annual review, it will operate the same to them, and then the next time we open up, they're entire application.

Mr. Baca stated those are the changes and he is happy to answer any questions from the Board of Regents before they move to the rest of the meeting.

Chairman Martin thanked Mr. Baca and asked to hear from Mr. Crone.

Mr. Crone stated he wanted to concentrate on this business but at the end he would like to make a comment about the new Senate, for the staff. Mr. Crone stated he would like to thank the team, Matt, President Balderas, Theresa and Stephanie Sandoval. It was a very comfortable atmosphere and as you can tell, the faculty will be very pleased with the progress we've made. He mentioned in a previous ratification that this is now a mature contract and it is a very good contract and so the first contract was negotiated in 1994 so it should be mature. Mr. Crone stated he wanted to thank the team as well. It was Scott was the lead negotiator, Steph Sawadsky who may be on the screen. He would like to thank her as well and turn it over to Scott for any comment.

Mr. Braley stated this was his second negotiation, he believes, he is always impressed with how he could probably use the word delete field in this context, because it's just too long to know what the lead field was. It all went very smoothly, everyone, you know, workday can't do this. Okay, well, let's come up with a solution that we could work with

and that's a great environment. If you think you didn't mention it, but we cleaned up a lot of the language of 36, 36 was messy and convoluted and he thinks we, because we had a good environment, we were able to sit down and say, let's just make this easier to read. This was a good experience and he too thanks everybody.

President Balderas stated he doesn't think this will get old and the minute that it changes he will also be very public about it. There is extensive negotiation and a ton of smart folks that are very detail oriented, but he will say that the college and these teams deserve a lot of credit. President Balderas stated he has litigated where negotiations then turn into either adversarial posture where they end up actually fighting and the system doesn't end up identifying common ground and these are all leaders and so he wants to commend them on the fact that we negotiated hard and then come out and still respect each other still like each other. We operate as steward that ensure that we're collectively bargaining but we don't want to deteriorate into some kind of ill will where we end up litigating and no one wins. So, President Balderas just wants to commend everyone because he thinks it goes without saying Tim's been around in years where it's, where some of those negotiations have cause some damage or some areas of harm and he has to commend all you for keeping the ship moving forward on that and congratulations on and this year was a heavy year. You're also forgetting that we put a little more time into this process, so President Balderas wanted to commend everyone who volunteers and gave a lot of their extra time and found time on those Fridays or whatever when we didn't always want to get together but, so congratulations.

Chairman Martin asked the Board of Regents for comments or questions.

Regent Velarde thanked the whole team. When she started on the board it was always a really contentious issue that we heard a lot about in union negotiations and we're going to get this attorney, and we're going to get that attorney and so it's nice not to hear that anymore and know that we're working together as a collective set of people that know that the end game is for our students, and so it's really great that we all have that common goal in mind, so Regent Velarde wanted to thank everybody.

Regent Archuleta state he had no questions and wanted to thank the team.

Regent Lovato stated good job everybody.

Regent Gurule stated no comments thank you everyone.

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to approve the faculty bargaining collective bargaining unit.

Regent Lovato moved to approve. Regent Velarde – second. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

6. Northern Federation of Educational Employees, AFT-NM, AFL-CIO
Adjunct Faculty Bargaining Unit Collective Bargaining Agreement

Chairman Martin stated we will move on to the Adjunct Faculty.

Matt Baca, General Counsel stated for the adjunct faculty, this was a year in which the entire agreement was subject to negotiation. So, you will see changes to multiple articles in both the memo and the attached, redline document. Mr. Baca stated he will run through them like he did before.

Mr. Baca stated with amended Article 23, the health and safety article. It pre-existed and had language regarding health and safety under the agreement. The full-time faculty amended their equivalent of the last year to make that provision a lot more robust. It's going to have a lot more discussion and identification of the obligations under it, so the one major change on the adjunct side was, we just basically pull that same language over into their agreement, and then we add a statement at the end of it affirming that, you know, any emergency notification or anything that would go out to full time faculty and staff on the college will also go out to adjuncts, which may seem like a little bit but we had an issue in the past where their listserv just doesn't make it onto the address. We've remedied that issue, but this statement is an affirmation that comes in as well. We made a small amendment to the tuition waiver provision in Article 24, just to include fees. We just said waiving tuition now says we include tuition and fees. The salary procedure, which is how an adjunct is appointed and how they are paid, the language was updated in the provision to affirm again that they'll be paid on a biweekly basis, according to the payroll calendar that's established by the college and that governs how every other employee is paid and they updated the language there to confirm that adjuncts will receive their letters of appointment prior to the start of the semester so they can identify any errors in them, make sure that they are subject, are compliant with the law and that they'll meet the pay schedule in the first year. Article 26 is compensation. That was the, sort of the big article. We had some preamble language prior to the pay matrix that referred to the basis of the numbers in the matrix being somehow related, although we, he thinks parties agreed it was not abundantly clear how related. The 2018 salary study that the school conducted that was really, full-time faculty salary, not, adjunct salary, adjunct faculty salary. So, you know, the adjuncts felt pretty strongly that it shouldn't be in there in terms of establishing the basis of the matrix, if it's not related to them, or amenable to that way. Now, in terms of the pay itself the matrix the way it's divvied up, stayed the same. A quick crash course is that it's a basically a 3 x 3 matrix. You're depending on what type of degree you have, bachelor's maters, or a PhD, and then, your pay rate is assigned by whether you teach a theory course, a lab, or a studio course and

then there's a third category referred to as special, which I think is what the previous salary study that's now part of it was attempting to decline. Mr. Baca stated the college, he thinks, has historically looked at this as, maybe areas of instruction where it's difficult to pull in an instructor, and so he has to pay that person more money to try to track them. The way the compensation shook out in the, in the matrix is that for lab and studio, and for, org, special rates be offered and the union accepted the 4% increase that the rest of, full-time faculty and the rest of the staff got from the legislature and then in the theory, section, we agreed to a 7% increase and so, the way that that table reads now is it's you know, up by 7% in that top row and then 4% out of the two rows. We, in that article, we are also incorporated language from the full-time Faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement. That commits to constant examination of equitable distribution of wage and salary, that language is in the full-time CBA and the adjunct advocate have been pulled over and agree. We've also agreed to examine that the actual matrix structure and whether that actually still meets the needs coming to the college and fair to the pay of adjuncts so, in the coming negotiations, or in the time between that, we'll examine is there a different way to look at this. Sometimes we get in a pattern of well, that's just throw always the way we've done it, and we are very much open to a different approach if it makes sense.

Mr. Baca stated moving on to the idea, then he already discussed this in the full time. The College offered, and our adjuncts, he thinks, excitedly agreed to remove the negative proration so if they teach a class under an enrollment less than 10 students, they are no longer docked per student. They just get the flat rate of pay and then they are also still eligible for a bonus in the online context. Four courses for their approval. This is a little wonky. We amended the agreement duration provision and Tim can speak to this probably a little bit more when he makes remarks but it was at one point that the College and the various units intentioned that no full agreement would be up. There would only be on per year. There would be a full negotiation. So, that you wouldn't have, as happened this year, we fully negotiated the staff CBA and also the adjuncts, CBA as President Balderas pointed out there's a lot of hours that go into that, so I think the original idea was that they would be off-cycle, so that you'd only have one full negotiation given year. Again, Time can probably speak to this, it was either COVID or some other occurrence caused that to come off track, so it ended up in a placeholder. So, what we've done here is agreed to open up the adjunct's full CBA again this coming year to set them on their own course and then we, then they'll set the three years.

Mr. Baca stated that covers the majority of the substantive changes and he didn't say this first but obviously would recommend the Board's approval of the changes and he is happy to answer any questions.

Chairman Martin asked the Board for questions and comments from Mr. Crone.

Mr. Crone stated to the latest issue, what this does, just to restore the sequential negotiations. When we, first had three bargaining units. Every contract was fully open every year and all of these, he used to have sort of sandy blonde hair. Now you know what? It's not his age, it's just this, this stress and if you want further information, we can go into that but. So, adjunct will be open again next year. Faculty will be the following year, and non-exempt staff will be the next year. Mr. Crone stated he stated in UNM Northern Branch as an adjunct faculty member and then the first couple of years, when it was the college, community college, he continued as an adjunct and then, of course, he has been here since and he believes that the entire history as from the community college to the college to the present there were, adjuncts only got 2 raises in that entire period and they now have 2 raises in 2 years. So obviously, this is tremendous progress and he wants to thank President Balderas and the team, the same team for this progress. The adjunct team's led negotiator was Tony Ballas who he believes is on. He wants to ask him to speak in a moment. Aspen Ballas and Kelvin Rodriguez. He believes Kelvin is on as well. They did a tremendous job. They're much tougher negotiators than Mr. Crone and so he willingly handed that roll over to them. So, he thinks with that, he will turn it over and asked Tony Ballas to say a few words.

Mr. Ballas thanked Mr. Crone and thanked the Board for inviting him. Mr. Ballas stated he would like to read a brief statement put together by himself and other members of the adjunct bargaining team whom Mr. Crone just referred to.

On behalf of Northern Federation of Adjunct, Northern Federation Educational Employees Adjunct Bargaining Unit, we want to acknowledge the members of the Executive Office at Northern, Matt Baca, Theresa Storey, Stephanie Sandoval and Hector Balderas for their efforts as well as for their endurance, and most of all, for their candid assessment of the plight of adjuncts at Northern, and furthermore for their willingness to grasp the nettle that previous executive teams proved unable or unwilling to themselves grasp. You have enabled this process to unfold collectively and collaboratively which has culminated this in unprecedented economic gains for adjuncts at Northern, and for this, we thank you sincerely.

We also want to take this occasion to thank the full-time members of the Federation, in particular Rhiannon West, Steph Zawadsky and without whom this would not have been possible, along with Time Crone, our illustrious president of course. We thank you for the countless hours spend shoulder to shoulder with us and our bargaining until through this entire process. Were it not for the years and even decades that Tim has put into building and maintaining the Federation through his offices often thankless hours, this occasion would not be possible, let alone successful in 2025 so our sincerest thank you and utmost gratitude to Time and the rest of the Federation leadership. For these and other deeds too numerous to mention.

Mr. Ballas stated now speaking a himself, he would also be remiss if he didn't set aside a special thank you to the members of our intrepid adjunct bargaining team, Kelvin Rodriguez and Aspen Ballas, without whom we would not be marking, let alone celebrating, this momentous and important occasion. Not least due to the boldness of their ideas, as well as their undeniable passion, diligence, and resolute dedication to seeing this process through the end, their undaunted execution of these life-changing provision on behalf of fellow adjuncts took hours of personal service and sacrifice, a sacrifice that, to our peers and colleagues at Northern, will not soon be forgotten, and so thank you both with utmost sincerity. In closing, it was by securing, in the past 2 years, 14% wage increases for adjuncts, and 17% for the lowest paid faculty at the college, as well as the elimination of the pernicious proportional scaling system. We have secured substantial economic gains for the adjuncts and full-time faculty at Northern, not to mention the streamlining of contract delivery. Along with stated commitment to address other disparities in this coming year, as well as numerous other changes in our bargaining agreement. We truly believe that we have set a new precedent for what's possible and achievable for adjunct faculty at Northern New Mexico and perhaps even set a new standard for higher education statewide through these collective and collaborative efforts.

Mr. Ballas stated he will conclude these remarks by stating simply that although the work is far from over, the present conditions augured forth by our collective efforts in 2024 and 2025 ought to be studied, dissected, and thoroughly understood in order, ultimately, that we might replicate these efforts in 2026. If for no other reason than to prove, against all odds, that lightning can indeed strike twice in the same place, speaking of Northern New Mexico. Which is a sentiment that we should keep in mind as we endeavor this process together in the next calendar year. Thank you for your attention.

Chairman Martin asked if there were any other comments from anyone and asked Mr. Crone if he had comments.

Mr. Crone stated he did want to address some of his lines, he mentioned his hair used to be sand blond, actually, we always called it dishwater. Just some quick clarification. Mr. Crone stated he would like to congratulate Toby and the staff. This was an idea that we've had for a number of years, and it's great to see it finally come into being. We have worked closely, he mentioned the

Back of the Senate and the Faculty Association. The union and those two organizations have very different tasks very different duties, obligations. And so, this is shared governance. It's not, you know, faculty emphasize shared governance, but the sharing has to include the staff as well and that includes the exempt staff, the non-exempt staff and the faculty. In other word, everyone so he things this is a great development for the college.

Mr. Crone stated one last thing, in the last ratification, Regent Velarde mentioned that he had been her professor in a number of classes and that she heard all of the what did you call it? Regent Velarde stated conspiracy theories. What he wants to know is, haven't all of those turned out to be in fact? Regent Velarde stated yes. I just want to clarify that. With that, thank you again.

President Balderas stated just some parting thoughts from, there's been a lot of gratitude on both sides. He would say that part of what has helped is we really try not to hide some of the long-term structural problems that Northern has had. So, as an administration we don't try to say, okay, well, we, we're concerned and so let us, this is our problem and not yours. We really, there's a, there's a very hopeful proactive conversation going on about financial sustainability and he thinks there is a lot of unity that Northern hasn't always gotten their fair share of the system, and so there's a lot of camaraderie that we build upon and so we negotiate but he just wanted to also think part of it is that Theresa Storey, Matt Baca are in those negotiations so we have access to some of the, some information that maybe having private lawyers in the past from out of state or out of town wouldn't have the context and so he really feels like we're hopeful that these negotiations will actually lead to three and five year opportunities long term to fix some of the historical inequities that maybe we've all kind of shared that faculty or adjuncts didn't always, we are all learning where it is that we can make more money. So, we can share more resources for the institution so that we could not do that without the faculty and staff at the negotiating table as well. Thank you.

Mr. Crone stated one last thing, when the faculty of the year awards were handed out at Convocation, that Dr. Zawadsky was the fully time faculty of the year, the Adjunct Faculty of the Year was Aspen Ballas and then the lead negotiator for the staff was Arnold Suazo who has been with the College 30 years and received a standing ovation. The only other standing ovation Mr. Crone had seen was when he retired and he thought that was maybe a little bit more ambiguous. Were they sad to see him go or what? But at any rate, we had a, that shows you how stellar.

Chairman Martin asked President Balderas to clarify something. When we get salary increases from the legislature, they don't apply towards the adjunct, is that correct. President Balderas stated, no, that is correct, so we have to find the money within the budget and we're very transparent. Our style is to show them availability, you know, funding and then non availability. So, then we really quickly get to like a family. We almost say, okay, how much for papas and beans? And they're part of that decision making. So yes, for the adjuncts, these are, some of these improvements are Northern's investment, not the State of New Mexico's, but we feel like we can make decisions together and so that is a big difference. Chair Martin thanked President Balderas.

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to approve the Adjunct Faculty Bargaining Unit Collective Bargaining Agreement

Chairman Martin asked if there were questions from the Board of Regents

Regent Velarde stated she had no questions but she does want to thank Tim because he didn't just teach her conspiracy theories, he taught her how to think critically and question everything and she has taught her children that so when they question her, she gets to be reminded about why she questions everything.

Regent Archuleta – no questions.

Regent Lovato – no questions

Regent Gurule – no questions.

Regent Velarde moved to approve the Adjunct Faculty Bargaining Unit Collective Bargaining Agreement. Second – Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes. Regent Lovato – yes. Regent Gurule. Motion passed unanimously.

7. Creation of Staff Senate - Action Required

Chairman Martin asked Dr. Bott Lyons to join the Board of Regents for the Creation of Staff Senate presentation.

Tobe Bott Lyons, PhD, stated he runs Upward Bound Grant and has been at Northern since 2014 and been doing Upward Bound since 2017. Dr. Bott Lyons stated he is coming to the Board of Regents meeting representing the Staff Senate Exploratory Committee. In the packet is the draft constitution and bylaws and they are asking the Board of Regents to approve it so they can adopt and establish a staff council, or we're calling it a staff association. Dr. Bott Lyons apologized as he is going to call it, like, 14 different things. It was Staff Senate and Staff Association and Staff Council but they went with Staff Association that staff centered as part of, mirroring the Faculty Senate and Faculty Association. Dr. Bott Lyons stated Staff Senates are very common practice in higher education. Most higher education institutions in fact we think all, based on their research in New Mexico at least, have them. It's a big part practice of shared governance and they saw, some staff here saw it as part of the strategic plan, the new strategic plan for Northern, that developing one was part of that plan. So, they very informally just called the meeting. A group of us went all over campus and just said, we should have a meeting to open to all staff to discuss what you want out of this, or is there interest in doing this, what would it look like and that was held last semester. From there, they had a sign in sheet. We were really careful on wanting to be, this isn't a project of, you know, a cadre of people or any special interest group, that this is just really something open to staff, any staff here, because it would be to serve the staff at Northern, and to serve Northern. So,

the exploratory committee has been meeting and we had open meetings, we sent a broadcast and had a sign-up, you know, it was open to any staff person who wanted to participate and we also were, wanted to be really careful that what you see is a representation of what would the structure of this look like, not so much what are any specific issues, right? Because we recognize that we're just a loose gathering of people who, we're not trying to create this to address any of our particular issues or any specific concerns that we have. It's more about how do we establish something that would be effective, and able to work with the administration and alongside the Faculty Association and the students and that's really the idea, is there would be a third arm and shared governance representing staff that could work hand-in-hand with the other senates and associations.

Dr. Bott Lyons stated in drafting this, they looked at some of the other state institutions here on how, what their constitution and bylaws look like, but especially talked a lot with Faculty Senate and really thought it made the most sense, right, if our how we set it up looks like how the faculty is set up here. They did meet with the President, and did have it reviewed with General Counsel before they brought it to the staff at convocation this year. So, they had a meeting where they presented the draft constitution and bylaws and then held an electronic vote so they sent out a broadcast just saying would you vote yes or no on adopting, on supporting the adoption of the Constitution and bylaws. They had 24 votes, 23 in favor, one against. They don't exactly know the hard number of how many staff that fit the definition of at least half-time, been here for 6 months of it but they think it's probably 130, 40, 50-ish, so they got close to 20% which they are happy with given that this isn't an official thing and they are just trying to get something off the ground and it's very grassroots, so far and so the documents before the Board of Regents are the proposed Constitution, just establishing this body and then the bylaws which is the first draft of how we would manage the actual association and Senate. Dr. Bott Lyons stated the only other thing he would say before any questions is just like the faculty, we, the staff association would be all staff that meet the definition we laid out here, which is have worked here for 6 months and are at least half-time at the director level or below, because we have so many directors here. Dr. Bott Lyons is a director and he supervises one person so we have lots of very small divisions and so he wanted to make sure that they were represented. They wanted to be very clear that this in no way supersedes authority of the union. That this is a separate kind of mechanism to address separate, a separate group. Including people who would be union representatives. So, they would assume they would work with the union and just like the faculty association, they would come to their meetings and review a partnership. Then they would develop this scheme of, we had a lot of trouble thinking about how representation would work, so they came up with the idea of different areas, and you'll see in the packet, they came up with 11. Federal Grants like Dr. Bott Lyons would be one area, student services would be one area, faculty, security and safety would be one, faculty, you know, they laid those out because there's different ways to go about it but how Northern is structured, we thought it would make the most sense to look at the different kinds of staff areas there are.

Dr. Bott Lyons opened it up to questions from the Board of Regents and stated some of the committee is present and happy to answer any questions about what this is. The next step would be is if it is adopted, they would start reaching out and holding nominations in that election so they could get senators who would then elect officers. So, the Exploratory Committee is no means representative of what this body would be. They want to get it started and then it would run itself.

Chairman Martin asked if there were questions from the Board of Regents.

Regent Velarde asked if they wouldn't be bringing bring issues or problems to the senate itself and asked if it is more just so to have, an official voice and representation and a way to bring any issues and also assume some responsibility.

Dr. Bott Lyons stated this was part of the thing the President emphasized when we met with hi, is like this would also be responsibility for those but no, we would be, you know, we would establish, just like faculty senate have, Staff President's Advisory Committee, that would meet with the administration and bring issues forward. But just this group isn't doing it. You know, we did not want to start with discussing, you know, those issues. That's for the Senate to do, once it is established.

Regent Archuleta - no questions.

Regent Lovato asked for clarification on Article III staff with faculty appointments will be considered staff or purpose of association, but that's not clear. Dr. Bott Lyons stated he knows because there's a lot, himself, as an example, there's a lot of fulltime staff, or you know, staff that would count, that are also adjunct faculty. What they said is, you know, somebody who has an adjunct faculty position, who is also staff, would be represented by the staff association. Just the only caveat they wanted to put in was you couldn't be on Faculty Senate, you know, they have Faculty Senate as adjunct representatives and a staff senator, that would be a conflict of interest but, you know, if you are an adjunct faculty, then you aren't, that your faculty doesn't supersede your staff. Regent Lovato asked because there there's a faculty, equivalent to this. It is called a staff.

Chairman Martin asked if there has ever been a staff senate. Dr. Bott Lyons stated not to his knowledge. Regent Lovato stated he has one suggestion. He stated they cited Robert's Rules of Ordered there is like a huge, it's a parliamentary, you might, just a suggestion cite a version that you're going to follow because there's a ton of versions and they call themselves Robert's Rules of Orders, the original one is like, a document. So just most folks use a simplified version.

Dr. Bott Lyons said he stated the most recent one but he didn't know that there's like and extended one. Regent Lovato stated yes, the original one is for, like large, huge, massive groups of people but there's, there's some that are written for smaller, like, 5, 7, 12. Just a suggestion, it's probably not a big credit.

Regent Gurule - no questions.

President Balderas would like to congratulate them and he strongly supports the creation of this not only as an advocacy governing vehicle but he, two things are of particular interest to the administration. One, is there are some marginalized staff groups on campus that don't always voice, you know, sometimes don't feel comfortable and they'll engage the union on an employment matter, but they'll stay quiet on maybe a directional issue, like, for instance, a policy. Should we be a four-day school versus a five-day? So, the groups facilities, he is excited some of those groups are invited. President Balderas also was encouraging to be as inclusive of what staff is because you don't know where the participation levels are going. So, he is excited for that and then two, as an administration sometimes it is easy to work as a body to prioritize there, maybe not always, like you said, legal position. You're going to let others handle those issues, but there's definitely a need for the administration every now and then to hear what your priority interests are and sometimes we share shared governance and shared responsibility is something he pushes because sometimes it's like, just give me your top five and then let's, we can only do one a year. You know, we have those kinds of real transparent conversation so it's a real good mechanism for shared accountability and so President Balderas stated he just wants to congratulate them and recommend that the Board and good luck with all the extra hours you're going to be putting. The other think, President Balderas thinks there's silent and we raised this, but they can talk about this later. He thinks they didn't mention anything in terms of fees or revenue or dollars, but we could talk about that later. How do you, how do you sustain that? The participation and just little expenses you'll come across.

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to create the Staff Senate.

Regent Velarde moved to create the Staff Senate. Second - Regent Gurule. A roll call vote was taken. Regent Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Martin thanked Dr. Bott Lyons.

X. DEEP DIVE

A. Campus Safety Planning

Chairman Martin stated before he goes into the deep dive, he apologized to our students and Mr. Trujillo for keeping them so long but he found out at the HERC meeting on August 7th, Regent Cody Johnson from New Mexico Tech, that the students have a statewide student leadership meeting and at that meeting on August 6th our Senator Dunbarr highlighted the need for enhanced campus safety through access control and crisis response teams. She also advocated for an anonymous tip line for drug trafficking or suspicious activity and also, we should have Narcan on the campus. So, Chairman Martin asked Mr. Trujillo to bring this Board up to date because we go so fast through our meetings, we don't know what's going on, so Chairman Martin asked Mr. Trujillo to update the Board. Mr. Trujillo presented the Safety Planning to the Board of Regents (attached). And Mr. Scott Stokes presented the Digital Fortress to the Board of Regents (attached).

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Martin entertained motion that the Board of Regents convene an executive session as authorized by the limited personnel matters exception covered by the Open Meetings Act to discuss President Balderas contract.

Motion - Regent Velarde moved to enter into Executive Session. Second - Regent Lovato. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board of Regents entered into Executive Session at 9:09AM.

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to reopen the Board of Regents meeting.

Regent Gurule moved to reopen the Board of Regents Meeting. Second - Regent Velarde.

A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board of Regents reopened the meeting.

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to approve the extension of President Balderas contract through June 30th of 2030 as discussed and directed council to draft an amendment to the party's signature.

Regent Gurule moved to approve the extension of President Balderas contract through June 30th of 2030. Second – Regent – Lovato. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

XII. VOTE TO REOPEN MEETING - Certification that only those matters described in the Executive Session Agenda were discussed in the closed session; if necessary, final action with regard to certain matters will be taken in Open Session

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to reopen the Board of Regents meeting.

Regent Gurule moved to reopen the Board of Regents Meeting. Second - Regent Velarde.

A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board of Regents reopened the meeting.

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to approve the extension of President Balderas contract through June 30th of 2030 as discussed and directed council to draft an amendment to the party's signature.

Regent Lovato moved to approve the extension of President Balderas contract through June 30th of 2030. Second – Regent – Velarde. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Martin entertained a motion to adjourn.

Regent Velarde moved to adjourn. Second – Regent Lovato. A roll call vote was taken. Chairman Martin – yes, Regent Velarde – yes, Regent Archuleta – yes, Regent Lovato – yes, Regent Gurule – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board of Regents meeting adjourned at 11:30AM.

Michael A. Martin
Chairman

Erica Rita Velarde
Vice Chair

Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Accreditation

Northern New Mexico College

Board of Regents “Deep Dive” Presentation

September 26, 2025

What is Accreditation?

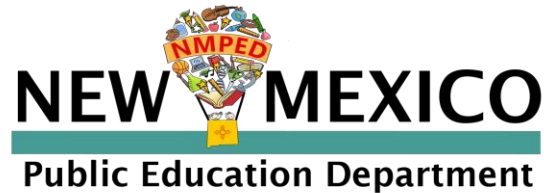
Accreditation is a process that checks if a college or university offers a quality education. Many colleges and universities seek two types of accreditation.

- Institutional Accreditation
- Programmatic Accreditation



Who are Northern's Accreditors?

Program Accreditation

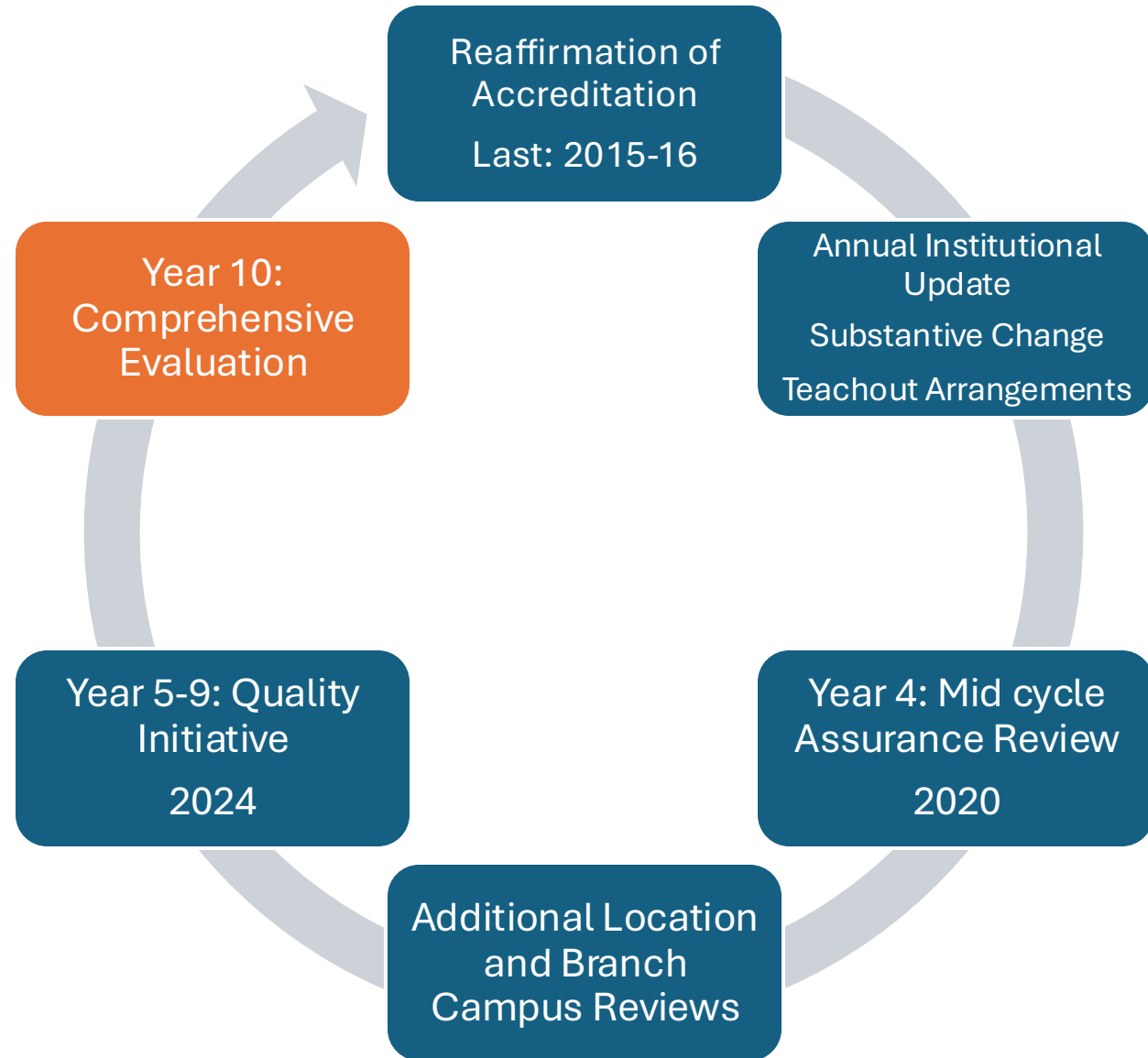


Institutional Accreditation

Accredited by the Higher Learning Commission

hlcommission.org

What is the Accreditation Process?



Open Pathways Comprehensive Evaluation



Assurance
Review



Federal
Compliance



Student Opinion
Survey



On-Site Peer
Review

Assurance Review

Assurance Filing



Assurance Argument



Other Materials



Evidence



Lock Date: October 20, 2025

Peer Review

Peer reviewers evaluate the information and recommend whether the institution complies with the Criteria for Accreditation and HLC standards.

HLC Four Criteria to Evaluate Institutions

Criteria evaluate if an institution's mission is clear and operational, its conduct is ethical, its educational offerings are of high quality, and its resources and planning are adequate to fulfill its mission.



MISSION



INTEGRITY



TEACHING AND
LEARNING



SUSTAINABILITY

HLC Federal Compliance

Covers a range of requirements that institutions must meet to be **eligible for federal financial aid** and **demonstrate compliance with U.S. Department of Education** regulations.

Federal Compliance **uploaded to Assurance System before the October 20, 2025, lock date.**

HLC Federal Compliance Key Areas

Proper awarding of credit hours,

Managing student complaints,

Transparent transfer policies,

Verifying student identity,

Protecting student privacy,

Publishing student outcome data, and

Maintaining standing with other accrediting agencies.

HLC Student Opinion Survey

HLC conducts surveys of student opinion to inform peer review teams visiting institutions as part of comprehensive evaluations.

The results are intended to help the peer review team identify possible questions for its meetings with faculty, staff, and students during the visit.



HLC Site Visit

November 17-19, 2025

Five peer reviewers from
comparable institutions

Day and a half on campus

Team will remain in area one
day for deliberations

What to expect from the reviewers?



Peer reviewers will meet with institution leadership, faculty, staff, and students in formal meetings and open forums to evaluate adherence to accreditation criteria.



Review institutional documents and self-study materials.



Evaluate operations against HLC criteria in teaching, learning, resources, and student support.



Assess the institution's capacity to sustain and improve academic quality and student success.

How YOU can help!



Familiarize yourselves with the documents.



Review prep emails from Accreditation Steering Committee.



Attend the BOR Forum in November.



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René Vellanoweth, PhD / Provost & Chief Academic Officer
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Lori Franklin, MA / Chair, Language & Letters
Ashis Nandy, PhD / Chair, Engineering & Technology
Sushmita Nandy, PhD / Chair, Biology, Chemistry, Env. Science
David Torres, PhD / Associate Professor, Math & Physical Science and Assessment Coordinator
Ellen Trabka, MSN / Chair, Nursing & Health Sciences

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Sandy Krolick, MA / Creative Director, Comms/Mktg
Carmella Sanchez, MS / Director, Institutional Research
Milam Shah, MA / Communications Coordinator

NORTHERN New Mexico College HLC ACCREDITATION 2025 MASTER PLAN



Hector Balderas, JD, CFE, President
NORTHERN New Mexico College

For more information:

- HLC website
 - <https://www.hlcommission.org/accreditation/cycles-and-processes/comprehensive-evaluation/>
- NNMC Comprehensive Evaluation Page
 - <https://nnmc.edu/about/institutional-accreditation/comprehensive-evaluation-visit-2025/index.html>

NORTHERN New Mexico College HLC ACCREDITATION 2025 MASTER PLAN



Hector Balderas, JD, CFE, President
NORTHERN New Mexico College

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



NORTHERN COMMUNITY,

Over the coming year we will work together to prepare for the reaffirmation of Northern's accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). To this end, I want to first acknowledge and thank each of you for your unique contribution to making Northern a place where students realize their dreams. While our accreditation is hugely important to validating the quality of our work here, the accreditation process is also an opportunity to reflect and showcase the high quality of our work and all that we do to support our students' success.

Through this process, we have an exciting opportunity to come together and discuss our strengths, assess how we operate, and identify areas where we can continue to grow into the future. We also have the opportunity to dive deeply into our work and evaluate all aspects of our college, from our strategic direction, to our academic programs, and how these and our operations align to advance our mission.

As you may be aware, this work will culminate in what HLC refers to as our comprehensive site visit, which will take place in November 2025. Because of the magnitude of this work, we have already begun putting in place the tools and teams we will need to successfully prepare for this visit. Over the coming year, we will work collectively to meet the challenge of this process. As we do this work together, I encourage you to reflect on Northern's mission, vision, and values, as this process at its core is about demonstrating how we express those principles every day through our work.

Northern has a strong history of demonstrating to the HLC how unique we are, the quality of our work, and the impact that we have on our students and the broader community. I am excited to collaborate with you all to build on this legacy, and to continue to demonstrate to HLC that Northern shares a deep commitment to our institutional principles that distinguishes us as an institution of excellence.

Thank you again for your shared commitment and for all that you do. I know that together we will show that not only does Northern satisfy the standards for accreditation, but that we go above and beyond those in our support of our students and our community.

Respectfully,

Hector Balderas, JD, CFE
President

2025 Reaffirmation of HLC Accreditation for Northern

NORTHERN New Mexico College moved to the Open Pathways model for accreditation after our 2016 Reaffirmation of Accreditation. *The Open Pathways model requires 3 reviews:*

YEAR 4: MID-CYCLE ASSURANCE REVIEW

In 2020, HLC-appointed peer reviewers evaluated the institution based on HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and other requirements. The review occurred virtually, without a campus visit. Read it on our website here: <https://nnmc.edu/about/institutional-accreditation/hlc-accreditation.html>

YEARS 5–9: QUALITY INITIATIVES

In 2024, NNMC reported our Quality Initiative after participating in the HLC Student Success Academy. The College worked to design and implement a project aimed at improving student retention and completion rates. Institutions are required to submit a project proposal between Years 5 and 7 and then report on the outcomes between Years 7 and 9. Peer reviewers evaluate both the project proposals and the outcomes reports.

YEAR 10: COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION FOR REAFFIRMATION OF ACCREDITATION

In November 2025 we will have our Year 10 evaluation process where HLC determines whether the institution's accreditation should be reaffirmed. Institutions are evaluated based on HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and other requirements. Peer reviewers review materials, visit campus, and consider feedback from students and community members. The team also reviews the institution's compliance with certain federal requirements.



Higher Learning Commission: The Assurance Review

ASSURANCE REVIEW

1. The institution demonstrates that it meets the Criteria for Accreditation by preparing an Assurance Filing, comprised of an Assurance Argument and an Evidence File, using HLC's Assurance System.
2. A team of HLC peer reviewers evaluates the institution's Assurance Filing. The outcome of this review is a recommendation as to whether the institution meets the Criteria for Accreditation. If the Assurance Review is part of a comprehensive evaluation, this review will also include an on-site visit by the peer review team.
3. A decision-making body reviews the institution's documentation and the recommendation from the peer review team and takes an official action.

ASSURANCE ARGUMENT

In the Assurance Argument, the institution demonstrates how it meets each Criterion and Core Component. For each Criterion, the institution offers:

- An articulation of how each Core Component within the Criterion is met.
- A summary statement regarding any additional ways in which the institution fulfills the Criterion that are not otherwise covered in the statements on the Core Components.
- Links to materials in the institution's Evidence File for each claim or argument made.

EVIDENCE FILE

The Assurance Argument will link to materials the institution uploads to its Evidence File to further support its narrative for each Criterion and Core Component. Every item uploaded to the Evidence File must be specifically linked to at least one Core Component in the Assurance Argument.

PEER REVIEW

A team of peer reviewers evaluates the institution's Assurance Filing and writes its report in the Assurance System. If the review is being conducted as part of a comprehensive evaluation (on-site review), the peer review team will write its report after completing its site visit and will take into account all the additional materials involved in the evaluation.

The peer review team's report includes its findings as to whether the institution meets HLC's Criteria for Accreditation, as well as possible recommendations for further action or monitoring. In judging whether the institution is in compliance with the Criteria, the team evaluates each Core Component individually. The team determines whether the Core Component is met, met with concerns or not met using the guidelines provided in HLC's policy on the Evaluative Framework for the HLC Criteria.

For more information, go to [HLCommision.org](https://www.hlcommission.org)

Criteria & Core Components

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION

Mission is foundational to an institution's curriculum, instructional activities and the success of its students. Mission further informs an institution's research and innovation pursuits, its community engagement activities and services, its role within the higher education ecosystem, its student body, and its decisions regarding operations and resource allocations. An institution's distinctive mission is the cornerstone around which the institution's effectiveness, integrity and commitment to continuous improvement are evaluated.

When demonstrating that it meets the Criteria for Accreditation, an institution has the opportunity to reflect on the significance of its distinctive mission as well as across the wider higher education landscape. Against these backdrops, the institution is able to speak to its current state, aspirations and plans for the future.

Specifically, the distinctiveness of an institution's mission may inform the strategies it adopts and the evidence it provides to demonstrate that it meets each Criterion and Core Component. In preparing for a review, an institution may provide evidence relevant to additional topics related to a Core Component beyond those specified in any HLC resource document. During the review process, peer reviewers will determine whether an institution meets the Criteria and Core Components on the basis of such evidence.

CRITERION 1. MISSION

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations. As noted above in Institutional Mission, an institution's distinctive mission will inform how it demonstrates that it meets the following Core Components of Criterion 1.

- ☐ **1.A. MISSION ALIGNMENT** The institution's educational programs, enrollment profile and scope of operations align with its publicly articulated mission.
- ☐ **1.B. MISSION AND PUBLIC GOOD** The institution's operation of the academic enterprise demonstrates its commitment to serving the public good.
- ☐ **1.C. MISSION AND DIVERSITY OF SOCIETY** The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

CRITERION 2. INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible. As noted above in Institutional Mission, an institution's distinctive mission will inform how it demonstrates that it meets the following Core Components of Criterion 2.

- ☐ **2.A. INTEGRITY** Actions taken by the institution's governing board, administration, faculty and staff demonstrate adherence to established policies and procedures.
(Criterion 2 continues on the next page)

Criteria & Core Components *CONT'D*

(Criterion 2 continued from previous page)

- ☐ **2.B. TRANSPARENCY** The institution presents itself accurately and completely to students and the public with respect to its educational programs and any claims it makes related to the educational experience.
- ☐ **2.C. BOARD GOVERNANCE** In discharging its fiduciary duties, the institution's governing board is free from undue external influence and empowered to act in the best interests of the institution, including the students it serves.
- ☐ **2.D. ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION** The institution supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge as integral to high-quality teaching, learning and research.
- ☐ **2.E. KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY AND APPLICATION** The institution adheres to policies and procedures that ensure responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.

CRITERION 3. TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

As noted above in Institutional Mission, an institution's distinctive mission will inform how it demonstrates that it meets the following Core Components of Criterion 3.

- ☐ **3.A. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS** The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.
- ☐ **3.B. EXERCISE OF INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY** The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.
- ☐ **3.C. SUFFICIENCY OF FACULTY AND STAFF** The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.
- ☐ **3.D. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING AND RESOURCES FOR TEACHING** The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.
- ☐ **3.E. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING** The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.
- ☐ **3.F. PROGRAM REVIEW** The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.
- ☐ **3.G. STUDENT SUCCESS OUTCOMES** The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

Criteria & Core Components *CONT'D*

CRITERION 4. SUSTAINABILITY: INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES AND PLANNING

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

As noted above in Institutional Mission, an institution's distinctive mission will inform how it demonstrates that it meets the following Core Components of Criterion 4.

- ☐ **4.A. EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES** The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.
- ☐ **4.B. RESOURCE BASE AND SUSTAINABILITY** The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.
- ☐ **4.C. PLANNING FOR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT** The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

For more information on Criterion 1-4, go to [HLCommission.org](https://www.hlc.commission.org)

President's Accreditation Advisory Committee

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 Sushmita Nandy, PhD / Chair, Biology, Chemistry, Env. Science
 David Torres, PhD / Associate Professor, Math & Physical Science
 and Assessment Coordinator
 Ellen Trabka, MSN / Chair, Nursing & Health Sciences

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 Milam Shah, MA / Communications Coordinator

HLC Accreditation Timeline

A successful HLC Accreditation visit takes considerable preparation by the Accreditation teams and the entire Eagle family. The HLC accreditors will want to meet with everyone — students, faculty, staff and community members. We are all a part of the process!

DATE	ACTIVITY	TEAM
Nov 2024 to Jan 2025	Assemble and train President's Accreditation team. Identify ALO.	All NNMC employees and students. Comms team.
Jan 2025	Create Core Component subcommittees to begin drafting narratives and gathering evidence. Begin monthly communication of HLC Accreditation progress & status.	Accreditation Team
Feb / March 2025	Continue drafts of Criterion 1-4.	Accreditation Team
April 2025	First drafts of Criterion 1-4, load evidence, and develop Accreditation 2025 website.	Accreditation Team
May 2025	Federal Compliance Review draft.	Accreditation Team
June 2025	Final draft of Assurance Argument & evidence files.	Accreditation Team
June / July 2025	Edit for accuracy, clarity, voice. Fix gaps.	Writing/editing team
Aug 2025	Create newsletters and distribute the HLC Accreditation Master plan (with mission, vision, values and Strategic Pillars, Assurance Argument Criteria, and Core Components).	Accreditation Team
Sept 2025	HLC Student Opinion Survey (Sept. 8-17). Share final Argument to the BOR as "informational" item, and campus community.	HLC Accreditation Team
Oct 2025	Final Assurance Argument, Evidence Files, and Federal Compliance Report due to HLC (lock date Oct. 20, 2025).	Accreditation Team
Nov. 3-7, 2025	Clean up campus, buildings and offices, chalk art, posters, etc. Create welcoming workspace for HLC.	NNMC Community and Planning Team
Nov 2025	Prepare site visit itinerary. NNMC materials to HLC upon request.	HLC Peer Review Team Planning Team
Nov 17-18, 2025	On-Site HLC Comprehensive Evaluation Visit	HLC Peer Review Team

#NorthernProud #StudentSuccess



MISSION, VISION, VALUES & STRATEGIC PILLARS

MISSION

Northern New Mexico College is an inclusive, student-centered teaching and learning community, dedicated to excellence, empowering students, and transforming lives.

VISION

As a Hispanic- and Indigenous-serving institution, sustained by place, culture, and innovation — Northern is a beacon of higher education for all students, igniting minds to create vibrant futures.

CORE VALUES

Student-Centered: We honor every student as a unique individual and prioritize student needs in all decision making.

Mutual Respect: We respect the differences of all peoples; diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging are our strengths.

Integrity: We value honesty, trust, and transparency.

Excellence: We commit to continuous improvement and strive to excel in all that we do.

Servant Leadership: We prioritize the growth, well-being, and empowerment of students, faculty, and staff, and are good stewards of resources entrusted to our care.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

Transformational Student Experience: We journey together with our students through a positive, proactive, personalized experience and become partners in their dreams.

Academic Excellence: We teach with spirit and heart to provide a culturally responsive, 21st-century learning environment that sparks critical thinking and maximizes intellectual achievement.

Organizational Excellence: We act with shared purpose and responsibility – focused on innovation and continuous improvement – committed to student success and empathetic, engaged leadership and expertise.

Strategic Partnerships: We build partnerships that enhance student and institutional success and community well-being.

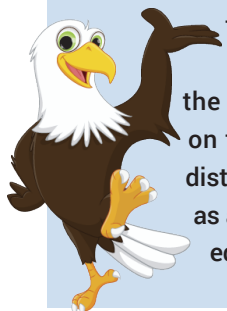
NORTHERN New Mexico College / HLC ACCREDITATION NEWSLETTER



MISSION is foundational to an institution's curriculum, instructional activities and the success of its students.

Mission further informs an institution's research and innovation pursuits, its community engagement activities and services, its role within the higher education ecosystem, its student body, and its decisions regarding operations and resource allocations. An institution's distinctive mission is the cornerstone around which the institution's effectiveness, integrity and commitment to continuous improvement are evaluated.

When demonstrating that it meets the Criteria for Accreditation, an institution has the opportunity to reflect on the significance of its distinctive mission as well as across the wider higher education landscape. ■



HLC CRITERION 1: MISSION

The Criteria for Accreditation convey the standards of quality by which HLC determines whether an institution merits accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation.

SUMMARY of NNMC Assurance Argument: CRITERION 1: MISSION

NNMC aligns its programs and operations closely with its mission to serve the community and support student success.

Adopted in 2024, its new Mission/Vision emphasizes student empowerment and community development, particularly for its Hispanic and Indigenous populations. As a regional comprehensive institution connected deeply to place, culture, and innovation, NNMC strives to become a beacon of higher education and opportunity for all.

NNMC's inclusive strategic planning involves students, faculty, staff, and community, guiding decisions from academics to resource allocation. It designs curricula aligned with student goals and regional workforce needs, partnering with LANL for specialized training. NNMC is also expanding trades education and community programs to support underserved populations and promote life-long learning.

NNMC incorporates student engagement into all aspects of college life, promoting outreach to rural, first-generation, and underrep-

HLC Criterion 1. Mission:

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

resented students. The college encourages civic involvement, preparing students both academically and as engaged citizens. Community participation in cultural events, arts programming, and partnerships with local organizations builds cultural awareness and civic pride.

Through these diverse collaborations and activities, NNMC demonstrates its commitment to its mission and the public good, showcasing its holistic approach to education, community outreach, and service. ■

An institution's distinctive mission will inform how it demonstrates that it meets the following CORE COMPONENTS OF CRITERION 1.



1.A. Mission Alignment-The institution's educational programs, enrollment profile and scope of operations align with its publicly articulated mission.



1.B. Mission and Public Good-The institution's operation of the academic enterprise demonstrates its commitment to serving the public good.



1.C. Mission and Diversity of Society-The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves

COUNTDOWN!



SEPT 8

HLC STUDENT OPINION
SURVEY — 13 days



OCT 20

ASSURANCE ARGUMENT
LOCK DATE — 55 days



NOV 5

CAMPUS CLEANUP —
71 days



NOV 17

SITE VISIT —
83 days

NORTHERN New Mexico College / HLC ACCREDITATION NEWSLETTER



How does an institution demonstrate that it meets HLC criteria through a "Mission-reflective lens?"

The college or university's mission is central to HLC's accreditation and assurance of academic quality. In determining whether institutions meet HLC requirements, HLC considers the institution's mission. An accredited institution demonstrates how it meets HLC requirements through a mission-reflective lens.

HLC's requirements reflect its values of academic quality. These values include academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge, as well as providing opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within an institution's mission and for the constituencies it serves.



HLC CRITERION 2: INTEGRITY

The Criteria for Accreditation convey the standards of quality by which HLC determines whether an institution merits accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation.

SUMMARY of NNMC Assurance Argument: CRITERION 2. INTEGRITY:

NMMC demonstrates integrity and ethical conduct through transparent communication, accountable governance, and responsible academic practices.

The College accurately presents itself to students and the public via its redesigned website and online catalog, which offer user-friendly access to information on academics, student services, financial aid, and compliance data. The site includes accreditation details, program accreditations, cost of attendance, consumer information, and student policies.

NNMC's Board of Regents operates independently, guided by bylaws, state law, and public accountability measures, including open meetings, ethics training, and annual financial disclosures. The Board

Criterion 2 Summary continued next page

HLC Criterion 2. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

■ **2.A. INTEGRITY:** Actions taken by the institution's governing board, administration, faculty, and staff demonstrate adherence to established policies and procedures.

■ **2.B. TRANSPARENCY:** The institution presents itself accurately and completely to students and the public with respect to its educational programs and any claims it makes related to the educational experience.

■ **2.C. BOARD GOVERNANCE:** In discharging its fiduciary duties, the institution's governing board is free from undue external influence and empowered to act in the best interests of the institution, including the students it serves.

■ **2.D. ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION:** The institution supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge as integral to high-quality teaching, learning and research.

■ 2.E. KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION, DISCOVERY AND APPLICATION:

The institution adheres to policies and procedures that ensure responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



SEPT 8

HLC STUDENT OPINION
SURVEY



OCT 20

ASSURANCE ARGUMENT
LOCK DATE



NOV 5

CAMPUS
CLEANUP



NOV 17

SITE
VISIT

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A SUCCESSFUL VISIT



MISSION is foundational to an institution's curriculum, instructional activities and the success of its students.

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When demonstrating that it meets the Criteria for Accreditation, an institution has the opportunity to reflect on the significance of its distinctive mission as well as across the wider higher education landscape.

HLC CRITERION 1: MISSION

The Criteria for Accreditation convey the standards of quality by which HLC determines whether an institution merits accreditation or reaffirmation of accreditation.

SUMMARY of NNMC Assurance Argument: CRITERION 1: MISSION

NNMC aligns its programs and operations closely with its mission to serve the community and support student success.

Adopted in 2024, its new Mission/Vision emphasizes student empowerment and community development, particularly for its Hispanic and Indigenous populations. As a regional comprehensive institution connected deeply to place, culture, and innovation, NNMC strives to become a beacon of higher education and opportunity for all.

NNMC's inclusive strategic planning involves students, faculty, staff, and community, guiding decisions from academics to resource allocation. It designs curricula aligned with student goals and regional workforce needs, partnering with LAMC for specialized training. NNMC is also expanding trade education and community programs to support underserved populations and promote lifelong learning.

NNMC incorporates student engagement into all aspects of college life, providing and reaching to rural, first-generation, and underserved students.

HLC Criterion 1. Mission: The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

Through these diverse collaborations and activities, NNMC demonstrates its commitment to its mission and the public good, showcasing its holistic approach to education, community outreach, and service.

An institution's distinctive mission will inform how it demonstrates that it meets the following CORE COMPONENTS of CRITERION 1.

- 1.A: Mission Statement: The institution's mission statement is clear, concise, and publicly available.
- 1.B: Mission and Vision: The institution's mission and vision statements are aligned and guide its operations.
- 1.C: Mission and Values: The institution's mission and values are integrated into its curriculum, co-curriculum, and community engagement.
- 1.D: Mission and Assessment: The institution's mission is used to inform its assessment of student learning and institutional effectiveness.

COUNTDOWN!

SEP 8
HLC STUDENT SURVEY — 13 days

OCT 20
ASSURANCE ARGUMENT LOOK DATE — 55 days

NOV 5
CAMPUS CLEANUP — 71 days

NOV 17
SID WALK — 83 days

Familiarize yourself with our **ASSURANCE ARGUMENT**. Read the newsletters & **MASTER PLAN**.

NORTHERN New Mexico College
HLC ACCREDITATION 2025 MASTER PLAN

Hector Balderas, JD, CFE, President
NORTHERN New Mexico College



Compete in the NNMC **SIDEWALK ART CHALLENGE**. Prizes awarded!



Students! Participate in the **HLC STUDENT SURVEY** on September 8.



Participate in the college-wide **CAMPUS CLEANUP** in November.

Summary of CRITERION 2. INTEGRITY: continued

avoids undue influence from external entities and maintains fiduciary oversight while delegating day-to-day management to the President and administration.

Academic freedom and freedom of expression are protected through institutional policies and faculty agreements, which support inquiry and the pursuit of truth. NNMC promotes academic honesty, ethical research, and information literacy, with policies that address plagiarism, copyright, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence. Oversight bodies like the Institutional Review Board and Animal Care Committees ensure compliance with federal regulations and humane research practices.

Student conduct and computing policies reinforce ethical behavior and integrity in the academic environment. Together, these practices uphold NNMC's commitment to ethical, responsible, and transparent institutional conduct. ■

SIGN UP FOR MOCK VISITS IN OCTOBER

Our HLC Peer Reviewers will be conducting forums on each of the four Core Components during the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation visit on November 17-18, 2025.

To help us prepare, we'll be sharing practice questions and holding "mock visits" in October.

■ Mock visits help us build confidence with the kinds of questions the Peer Reviewers may ask.

■ Mock visits are a great way to practice talking about Northern and our Mission, and how our work contributes to student success.

■ The process involves faculty, staff and students, so everyone feels engaged and prepared.

■ Think of it as a friendly rehearsal to help us shine and succeed!



Criterion 3 Mock Visit questions to practice for the Accreditation visit:

1. Do you know what NNMC's "Quality Initiative" was these past three years?

HINT: It was also known as the SSI.

2. What is your department's vision for the future? How does it relate to the College's vision?

HINT: NNMC's Mission/Vision is on the website in the "About Northern" menu.

3. How do co-curricular activities/programs contribute to the educational experience of students?

HINT: See page 2

Are students provided with sufficient and relevant co-curricular experiences?



HLC CRITERION 3: TEACHING & LEARNING for STUDENT SUCCESS

SUMMARY of NNMC Assurance Argument: CRITERION 3. TEACHING & LEARNING FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

N NMC provides high-quality, mission-aligned teaching and learning through well-designed academic programs supported by qualified faculty and student services.

All programs are based on clear learning outcomes and follow appropriate levels of academic rigor for certificate, associate, and bachelor's degrees.

Program quality is ensured through a seven-year review cycle, external accreditation when applicable, and assessment of student learning outcomes. Faculty are credentialed, regularly evaluated, and supported through professional development in pedagogy and online instruction.

Courses, including online and dual credit, uphold consistent standards and are taught by qualified faculty. The General Education curriculum builds foundational skills in communication, critical thinking,

Criterion 3 Summary continued next page

HLC Criterion 3. Teaching & Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission.

3A. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

3B. EXERCISE OF INTELLECTUAL INQUIRY The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

3C. SUFFICIENCY OF FACULTY AND STAFF The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

3D. SUPPORT FOR STUDENT LEARNING AND RESOURCES FOR TEACHING The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

3E. ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

3F. PROGRAM REVIEW The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

3G. STUDENT SUCCESS OUTCOMES The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institution. ■

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



SEPT 8
OPEN UNTIL
SEPT 17



OCT 20
ASSURANCE ARGUMENT
LOCK DATE



NOV 5
CAMPUS
CLEANUP



NOV 17
SITE
VISIT

HLC'S STUDENT OPINION SURVEY WENT OUT SEPT 8!



STUDENTS! WE NEED YOUR HELP.

Please share your experience at
Northern New Mexico College
in a 5-minute online survey.



**Higher Learning Commission
Student Opinion Survey
September 8-17, 2025**

CRITERION 3. Summary continued

quantitative reasoning, and social responsibility, aligning with state-mandated skills and course numbering standards.

Academic and co-curricular learning are integrated through capstones, research, internships, and civic engagement, enriching student learning. Student support—advisement, tutoring, developmental coursework, and early alert systems—are accessible, regularly reviewed, and aim to promote equitable outcomes.

Student conduct and computing policies reinforce ethical behavior and integrity in the academic environment. Together, these practices uphold NNMC's commitment to ethical, responsible, and transparent institutional conduct. ■

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF CO-CURRICULAR?

CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES take place outside of a course's curriculum but are related to academics in some way.

Participation is voluntary and has no bearing on a student's GPA or accumulation of academic credits.

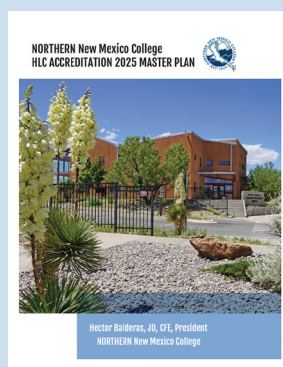
Co-curricular activities are activities related to student coursework. They are practice sessions that allow students to apply what they learn in class in real-world situations.

Although these activities are not graded, they enable students to take concepts from their textbooks and implement them in a practical way. This approach makes learning more meaningful and helps the lessons stay in students' memories.

Co-curricular examples for a Science class: If one is learning about biology, a co-curricular activity might involve joining a science club to engage in hands-on experiments or to prepare for the STEM Exploration Day or Research Symposium.

Co-curricular examples for a Social Studies class: Participating in student senate is considered a co-curricular activity because it allows students to gain firsthand experience in government and policy, applying what they have learned in class. ■

DID YOU MISS SOME NEWSLETTERS? [Read them here:](#)



THE MASTER PLAN



CRITERION 1: MISSION



CRITERION 2: INTEGRITY



CRITERION 4 Mock Visit questions to practice for the Accreditation visit:

1. How do we ensure that the budget meets the Mission, Core Values, or Strategic Plan for proposed spending of resources?

Hint: [Mission/Vision/Strategic Plan](#).

2. How are assessment results, program review recommendations, and strategic planning goals taken into consideration during the budget decision-making process?

Hint: *Strategic Plan*, see page 2.

3. Other than student academic achievement, what other processes are well-functioning in the evaluation of institutional effectiveness? Can you share examples?

Hint: [Institutional Research Surveys](#).

4. What kinds of changes are taking place within the College? Do you see these changes as positive or negative? How will these changes impact NNMC?

Examples: New programs, enrollment increases, DEI, loss of grants.

5. Is there equity among departments relative to funding, staffing, space, and support services?

Hint: Budget planning processes.



HLC CRITERION 4: SUSTAINABILITY, INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS, RESOURCES & PLANNING

SUMMARY of NNMC Assurance Argument:
CRITERION 4 / Sustainability:

Criterion 4 demonstrates NNMC's philosophy that resource decisions and activities reflect Strategic Direction objectives, aligned to the College's mission. Its organizational structures reflect the awareness and understanding of current resources, organizational changes, and emerging opportunities that influence NNMC's mission.

NNMC is dedicated to responsible financial management and proactive cost control. It has integrated sustainability into its strategic and operational framework.

Through various initiatives and successful grants, NNMC aims to enhance long-term institutional resilience, diversify revenue sources, and manage costs, all while maintaining a high quality of education. Each of these efforts not only addresses present-day challenges but also lays a foundation for future generations.

NNMC has leveraged its funding to strengthen core institutional capacities that appeal to external funders and partners, thus enhancing its ability to attract future philanthropic support. ■

HLC Criterion 4 : Sustainability

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A. Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

4.B. Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

4.C. Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment. ■

COMING UP!



OCT 20
ASSURANCE
ARGUMENT LOCK



NOV 5
CAMPUS
CLEANUP



NOV 17
SITE
VISIT

NNMC STRATEGIC PLAN 2028 / SOARING TO NEW HEIGHTS

MISSION STATEMENT

Northern New Mexico College is an inclusive, student-centered teaching and learning community, dedicated to excellence, empowering students, and transforming lives.

VISION STATEMENT

As a Hispanic- and Indigenous-serving institution — sustained by place, culture and innovation — Northern is a beacon of higher education for all students, igniting minds to create vibrant futures.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

Transformational Student Experience:

We journey together with our students through a positive, proactive, personalized experience and become partners in their dreams.

Academic Excellence:

We teach with spirit and heart to provide a culturally responsive, 21st-century learning environment that sparks critical thinking and maximizes intellectual achievement.

Organizational Excellence:

We act with shared purpose and responsibility – focused on innovation and continuous improvement – committed to student success and empathetic, engaged leadership and expertise.

Strategic Partnerships:

We build partnerships that enhance student and institutional success and community well-being.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Design and deliver exceptional services and support to ensure student success.

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify and act upon specific barriers to and opportunities for student access and success.
- Create a targeted communication system for students that fosters success throughout their journey from application through graduation.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Foster a teaching and learning environment that promotes a culture of belonging and responds to the needs of all students.

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop and implement processes that foster an inclusive and supportive educational environment, promoting student growth academically, socially, and emotionally.
- Ensure the same quality of education for all students regardless of modality.
- Improve and sustain co-curricular assessment development.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Provide structured pathways that prepare students for advanced educational opportunities, meaningful careers, and service to community.

OBJECTIVES:

- Develop more articulation agreements with community and other four-year colleges.
- Expand local and state workforce development partnerships.
- Increase internship and community service learning opportunities.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Invest in our people, and integrated enterprise-level operations, systems and technology.

OBJECTIVES:

- Foster a positive, supportive campus culture, encouraging open communication, teamwork, recognition, professional growth, and work-life balance.
- Build upon and strengthen a culture of shared governance and shared responsibility.
- Modernize, integrate, and optimize data and technology systems.
- Maintain exceptional financial and resource stewardship.

STRATEGIC GOAL 5: Strengthen Northern's visibility, brand, value and impact.

OBJECTIVES:

- Strategically increase sustainable enrollment.
- Develop a comprehensive communication and marketing strategy through shared knowledge and responsibility.
- Advance understanding, engagement, and collaboration among our communities and stakeholders.

STRATEGIC PLANNING TERMS

PILLARS: key areas or priorities that an organization focuses on to achieve its long-term vision, providing a framework to ensure all efforts align with the vision.

GOALS: broad, long-term aims that represent what an organization wants to achieve, providing clear direction and inspiration.

OBJECTIVES: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) targets that help achieve the goals.

ACTION ITEMS: concrete, detailed tasks that contribute to the objectives.